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ABSTRACT

This document provides guidelines for administrators, practitioners, and parents to use in developing high quality preschool education programs for 4-year-olds. Ideas presented in the document are based on principles set forth and confirmed by research on individual needs of young children, child development, and the conditions under which children learn best. Contents provide standards for nine areas of program operation: (1) philosophy; (2) population and access; (3) curriculum; (4) learning environment and equipment; (5) advisory council and community involvement; (6) parent and family involvement; (7) funding; (8) administrative and supervisory personnel; and (9) instructional staff personnel. Standards and criteria of each area of program operation are described. Standards are offered as measures for qualitative and quantitative assessment of preschool programs and are recommended as guidelines for curriculum development. Each criterion is elaborated in terms of quality indicators which can be used to determine the extent to which standards are met. Definitions and a brief statement of the early childhood education philosophy of the Michigan State Board of Education are provided. Over 60 research-based references that support the contents of the guide are cited. (RH)

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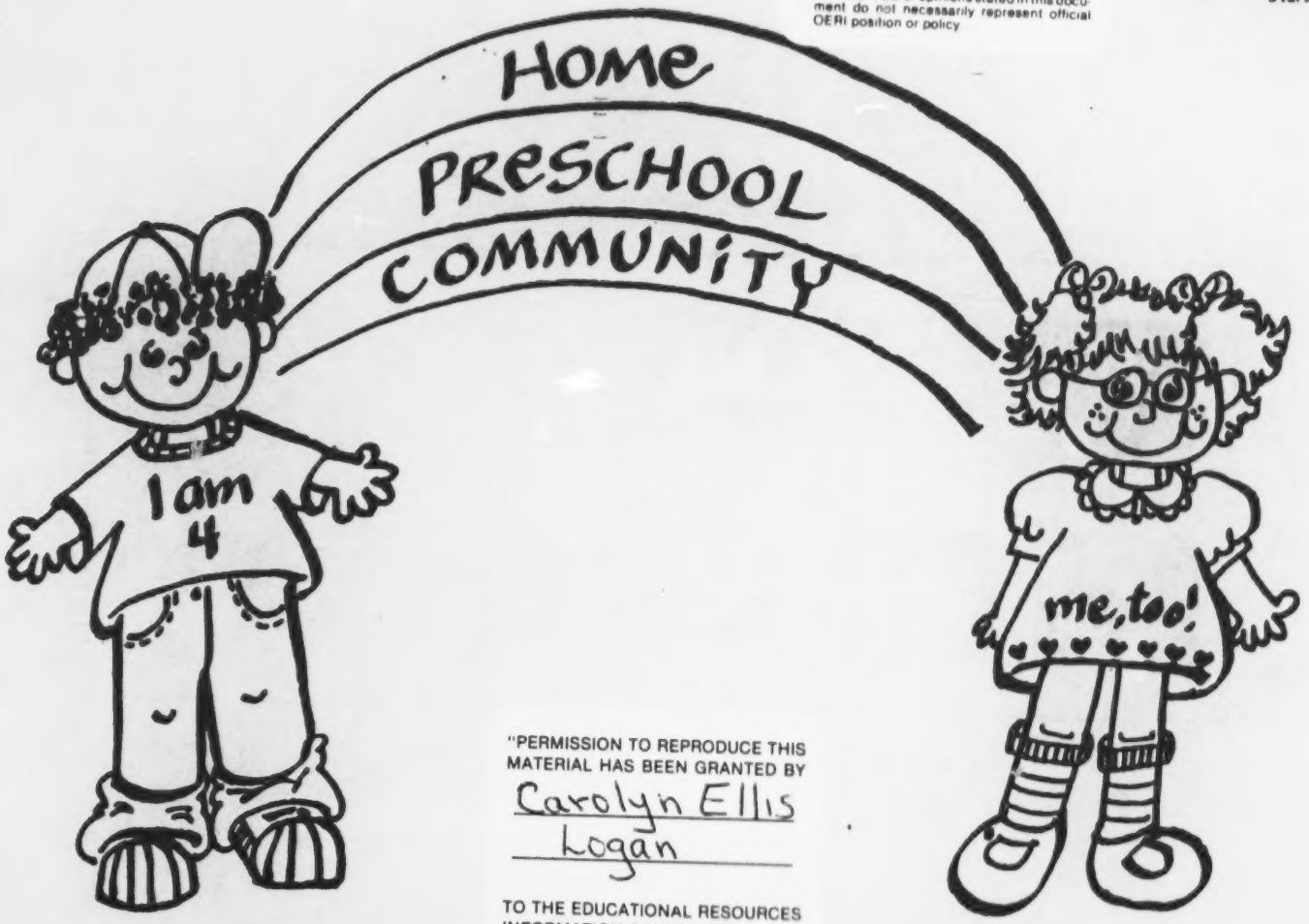

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The Standards of Quality & Curriculum Guidelines

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Change of Language for R.1.1.a, Instructional Staff Section of the "Standards of Quality and Curriculum Guidelines for Preschool Programs for Four Year Olds"

R.1.1. Quality Indicators: The early childhood teacher has educational training including:

a. an early childhood (ZA) endorsement or bachelor's degree in early childhood/ preschool education or child development; or equivalent continuing education experience, as approved by the State Board of Education; or equivalent experience, as a certified elementary teacher of children 0 through 6 years of age.

Certified elementary teachers who do not have either ZA endorsement or equivalent State Board of Education approved continuing education units may be employed beginning September 1, 1988, if enrolled in an early childhood/preschool education or child development program and must complete the ZA endorsement program within five years. Beginning September 1, 1993, all teachers must have early childhood (ZA) endorsement.

Certified elementary teachers assigned to preschool programs prior to September 1, 1988, who do not meet either of the above criteria, may continue to teach young children.

At the regular meeting of the State Board of Education on July 15, 1987, the following interpretation of the above quality indicator (R.1.1.a) was adopted.

Certified elementary teachers assigned to preschool programs prior to September 1, 1988 may continue to teach in preschool programs; and will receive upon application a letter of approval from the State Board of Education indicating authorization to continue to teach in preschool programs.

Certified elementary teachers who do not have a ZA endorsement may be employed beginning September 1, 1988, if enrolled in an early childhood/preschool education or child development program leading to the ZA endorsement and must complete the program within five years.

Beginning September 1, 1993, all teachers must have the early childhood (ZA) endorsement to teach in preschool programs.

STANDARDS OF QUALITY

AND

CURRICULUM GUIDELINES

FOR
PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS
FOR FOUR YEAR OLDS

MICHIGAN STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

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INTRODUCTION

Recognizing the value and need for preschool education programs for four year olds, the State Board of Education appointed an Early Childhood Ad Hoc Advisory Committee in July, 1985. Parents, professionals, and representatives of various agencies, organizations and institutions concerned with the education and welfare of young children were commissioned to develop "Standards of Quality and Curriculum Guidelines for Preschool Programs for Four Year Olds." The committee began working in November, 1985 and concluded its assignment in May, 1986. Their commendable efforts resulted in a draft of the contents that follow.

The Department of Social Services was represented on the Committee responsible for the drafting of this document. The completed draft was also submitted to the agency for review and assurance that the information and direction provided fit within the framework on Public Act 116, the licensing regulations for all child care programs. Special consideration was given to this issue because Public Act 574 of 1978 requires child care centers, established by local or intermediate school districts, to comply with Public Act 116 of 1973, as amended.

This document is designed to assist administrators, teachers and parents in developing high quality preschool education programs for four year olds. The ideas presented are based on principles set forth and confirmed by research concerning the individual needs of young children, the areas and sequence of development, and the atmosphere and conditions under which children learn best. This information is intended to provide the direction needed to design and implement programs that meet the specific and different needs of children in the targeted age group, rather than developing programs that require children to meet inappropriate and unreasonable demands.

Included is a set of "critical elements or components" which are used to define "quality" and recognized as determinants or program results. Subsequently, philosophy, population/access, curriculum, learning environment and equipment, advisory council/community involvement, parent/family involvement, funding, administrative/supervisory and instructional staff personnel are presented as distinct areas for which standards have been established.

These Standards are offered by the State Board of Education as measures for identifying and comparing the qualitative and quantitative value of a preschool program. They articulate what is expected or considered "appropriate" and adequate for quality programming and are suggested as a model for emulation.

Standards of quality listed for the area of curriculum are also recommended as "guidelines" for curriculum development. In this capacity, they delineate specific and important factors for the establishment of a framework within which acceptable curriculum is expected to fit.

It is hoped that this information will be used to promote and improve understanding for the development and implementation of appropriate and achievable goals, objectives, and activities for the learning and development of our four year olds.

EARLY CHILDHOOD AD HOC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The basic contents of this document are based on the advice and recommendations of the following Committee members, with input from the groups and organizations thay represent. The Michigan Department of Education is sincerely grateful to these individuals for the time and effort devoted to sharing their expertise. We also thank the represented groups for their support and cooperation in meeting this most important need.

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MICHIGAN STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
PHILOSOPHY OF
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION *

It is the intent of the Michigan State Board of Education to propose and support early childhood programs that recognize each child as a whole person whose growth occurs in developmental stages that are sequential and continuous. These programs are based on a premise that children learn best when there are planned, multicultural, non-sexist, developmentally/age appropriate curriculum; qualified and nurturing relationship between home, school and the wider community; opportunities for the participation of parents and other family members in the development and implementation of the program; and a continuing evaluation system which assesses and reviews the progress, performance and development of children, personnel and overall program.

These conditions are articulated and presented as the bases upon which all early childhood education programs are developed, planned, implemented, evaluated and revised to provide the best chance for a quality life for young children.

* Approved by the State Board of Education, September 9, 1986.

DEFINITIONS

Administrative/Supervisory Personnel - Personnel at the local level who are responsible for administering and/or supervising program services and activities of the early childhood education program and providing leadership to the instructional staff. Such personnel could include district level or building administrators/supervisors who are responsible for the early childhood education program or a cluster of programs of which early childhood education is included. Also included are program directors and specialists.

Advisory Council/Community Involvement - An organized group of persons who serve as a communication link between the home, school and community. This council assists administrators and teachers in planning, developing and reviewing the early childhood education program.

Approach - The general methodology and technique used to establish or maintain an environment conducive to nurturing, stimulating and guiding the learning and development of young children.

Child Development Associate (CDA) - Nationally recognized credential awarded through the Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition, a subsidiary of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, to individuals who have demonstrated criteria-based competence in working with children 3-5 years of age.

Criterion - A descriptive statement of a subtopic or component of a given standard.

Curriculum - The content and composition of the preschool program, including all daily activities, transitions and routines which impact on the child's physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development.

Learning Environment and Equipment - The physical setting, including the availability and arrangement of space and all appointments, such as toys and other materials or supplies needed to operate a preschool program.

Funding - The provision, appropriation and use of monies to support operation of the early childhood education program.

Early Childhood Education - Provision of purposeful experiences, public or private, aimed at guiding the physical, emotional, intellectual, and social development of young children, 0-8 years of age,1** or through the third grade.

Instructional Personnel - The instructional staff includes all personnel who are assigned responsibility for teaching or assisting in teaching in the early childhood education program Such personnel may include the early childhood teacher, paraprofessional or associate teacher, and teacher aide or teacher assistant,2** supplementary staff, non-paid personnel including parents and other volunteers.

Parent/Family Involvement - Family-oriented programs which are integrated into the overall early childhood education program and which provide parents and other family members with opportunities to participate in all phases of program development and implementation. Opportunities for parents and familiies to receive support, expand knowledge of child development, increase parenting skills and extend children's learning at home are included.

Philosophy - An underlying theory or statement of fundamental beliefs which establishes a framework for program decisions and provides direction for goal setting and program implementation. The foundation upon which all activities are based.

Population/Access - Policies, procedures, and conditions that influence or determine who will have access to the early childhood education program and which assure that children who meet established eligibility critieria shall not be excluded from participation because of distinguishable personal characteristics.

**1 Early Childhood is defined by the National Association for the Education of Young Children as the period between birth through age 8. Contents of the document relate specifically to programs for children 4 years of age or programs which immediately precede the kindergarten experience.

**2 The titles associate and teacher assistant as used in some settings, are included to concur with the nomenclature provided by the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Preschool/Pre-Kindergarten Program - As used in this document means a program which immediately precedes the kindergarten experience and is specifically designed for children who are at least 4 years old by December 1 of the enrollment year*.

Preprimary Programs - Programs which precede kindergarten specifically designed for children 0-4 years of age.

Public Act 116 - Licensing rules for child care centers promulgated by the authority of the Michigan Department of Social Services which set forth the minimum standards for the care and protection of children attending Michigan's day care centers and nursery schools.

Quality Indicator - A specific description of an outcome, condition, process, role, function, etc., of a component of the criterion which can be observed and used to determine the extent to which standards are met.

Standards of Quality - A group of acknowledged measures of comparison for qualitative and/or quantitative value which outlines what is expected or considered appropriate and adequate for the operation of a high quality preschool program for four year olds.

Structure - The arrangements under which children and personnel function, and the organization of activities to meet individual and group needs in a teaching/learning situation.

Supplementary Staff - Non-paid personnel, such as parents, volunteers, etc.

Validated Instruments - Instruments for evaluation and assessment which have been tested for accuracy by comparing or correlating test results with other criterion or index.

Whole Person - The results of child growth and development in the four fundamental areas: physical, social, emotional, and intellectual.

ZA Endorsement - Endorsement given by Michigan colleges and universities upon completion of an 18-hour early childhood education program requirement, which is recognized by the Michigan Department of Education as fulfillment of teacher certification in pre-kindergarten and kindergarten.

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* The title 'Preschool Program' may be used to interchangeably with 'Pre-kindergarten Program,' because both refer to the period that immediately precedes the kindergarten experience.

STANDARDS OF QUALITY AND CURRICULUM GUIDELINES

These Standards of Quality and Curriculum Guidelines have been developed to assist local educational agencies in the assessment of any pre-kindergarten program (regardless of funding source); and the design of new pre-kindergarten programs to meet the unique needs of young children.

In order to facilitate communication and understanding, the following scheme or format is used.

Standard - A descriptive statement established by the committee and used as a model of qualitative and quantitative characteristics for assessment of existing programs and for the development of new programs.

Criterion - A descriptive statement of a subtopic or component of a given standard.

Quality Indicator - A component of the criterion, such as an outcome, condition, process, role, function, etc., which can be observed and used to determine the extent to which standards are met.

PHILOSOPHY

An underlying theory or statement of fundmental beliefs which establishes a framework for program decisions and provides direction for goal setting and program implementation. The foundation upon which all activities are based.

PHILOSOPHY

A. STANDARD: A WRITTEN PHILOSOPHY FOR THE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAM IS DEVELOPED AND UTILIZED AS THE BASIS FOR MAKING PROGRAM DECISIONS AND ESTABLISHING PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES.

A.1. Criterion: The philosophy is developed with input from early childhood staff, administrators, parents and community representatives, and recommended for adoption by the local board of education.

A.1.1. Quality Indicators: The philosophy is:

a. Developed by incorporating suggestions from the early childhood education staff, administrators, parents and community representatives.

b. Reviewed every three years by the staff and advisory commitee.

c. Revised or updated to reflect staff and advisory committee input, new legislation, research findings or other significant factors which impact early childhood education, and recommended for adoption by the local board of education.

A.2. Criterion: The philosophy states the rationale for the early childhood education program.

A.2.1. Quality Indicators: The early childhood education program philosophy:

a. Supports state and local goals, standards and guidelines for an early childhood education program.

b. Is consistent with other educational philosophies that affect the early childhood education program.

c. Reflects the current legislative intent for the early childhood education.

d. Reflects the social, economic, cultural, and familial needs of the society as well as the community.

e. Identifies educational, and/or interdisciplinary theories referenced as resources.

A.3. Criterion: The philosophy is reviewed and approved by the Local Board of Education.

A.4. Criterion: The philosophy is applied to all components and facets of the program.

A.4.1 Quality Indicators: The philosophy is:

a. In printed form and available to all interested persons.

b. Specifically distributed to early childhood education staff, administrators, governing board members, advisory committee members and parents.

A.4.2. Quality Indicators: The philosophy is utilized in the early childhood education program for:

a. Identifying program goals and objectives.

b. Planning the program.

c. Developing the program content.

d. Implementing the program.

e. Evaluating the program.

f. Revising the program.

g. Developing administrative, supervisory, instructional and paraprofessional job descriptions.

POPULATION / ACCESS

Policies, procedures and conditions that influence or determine who will have access to the early childhood education program and which assure that children who meet established eligibility criteria shall not be excluded from participation because of distinguishable personal characteristics.

POPULATION / ACCESS

B. STANDARD: POPULATION/ACCESS - THE TARGET POPULATION IS IDENTIFIED AND HAS ACCESS TO AN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAM.

B.1. Criterion: The early childhood education program is made available in a manner that does not exclude or limit participation on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, handicapping conditon, or socio-economic status.

B.1.1. Quality Indicators: The early childhood education program has:

a. Developed a plan or system for recruitment, including materials to describe the program.

b. Developed critieria for selection and placement of children which include varied methods and techniques for comprehensive screening and assessment.

c. An adequate number of staff to meet the needs of children in the program.

B.1.2. Quality Indicators: The early childhood education facilities are:

a. Barrier free.

b. Capable of being adapted/altered to meet special needs.

c. Adequately spaced and equipped to meet the needs of each child.

B.2. Criterion: The early childhood education program provides support services to meet the needs of the target population.

B.2.1. Quality Indicators: The early childhood education program provides:

a. Information about the program in the languages of various ethnic groups in the community.

b. Information about the program to persons of low socio-economic status through service providing agencies and organizations.

c. Language support services for limited English proficient students.

d. Readers and interpreters for hearing and sight impaired students and parents/guardians.

e. Diagnostic services for students suspected of being handicapped; psychologically, neurologically, etc.

f. Special education services for students with handicapping conditions; and those needing speech, language, audiological, physical and/or occupational therapy; social work; or special education aides.

CURRICULUM

The content and composition of the preprimary program, including all daily activities, transitions and routines which impact on the child's physical, social, emotional and intellectual development.

CURRICULUM

C. STANDARD: THE PROGRAM IS STRUCTURED TO ENHANCE CHILDREN'S FEELINGS OF COMFORT AND SECURITY.

C.1. Criterion: The program is structured to ensure the development of positive adult/child relationships.

C.1.1. Quality Indicators: There is evidence that:

a. Children are treated with warmth, respect and caring, regardless of their socio-economic, cultural, ethnic, religious, or family background, and regardless of their behavior, appearance, or any handicapping condition.

b. Each child experiences positive adult attention during the day.

c. Each child's primary language is valued and used for communication.

d. Discipline is positive, predictable and constructive (adults do not shame, hit, slap, or spank children).

C.2. Criterion: The program is structured to ensure that teaching staff are consistent over time.

C.2.1. Quality Indicators: There is evidence that:

a. The program has a policy which promotes extended employment of staff.

b. Staff scheduling is designed to provide children with consistency of adult supervision.

c. Children can identify a specific adult from whom to seek help, comfort, attention, and guidance.

C.3. Criterion: The program is structured to ensure the development of positive child/child relationships.

C.3.1. Quality Indicators: There is evidence that:

a. Children are given opportunities to interact informally with one another.

b. Adults provide information to children enabling them to interact more effectively with one another.

c. Adults help children initiate interactions with peers.

d. Adults help children negotiate conflicts among themselves.

e. Adults teach children specific social skills to enhance interpersonal relations.

C.4. Criterion: The program is structured to ensure that children's biological needs are met.

C.4.1. Quality Indicators: There is evidence that:

a. Children may use the toilet whenever they deem it necessary.

b. Children may rest when they are tired.

c. A nutritious snack is made available during each 2 1/2 hour session.

d. Drinking water is available to children throughout the day.

e. The program policy states that depriving a child of snack, rest, or necessary toilet use is forbidden.

C.5. Criterion: The program is structured to ensure that children's physical needs are met.

C.5.1. Quality Indicators: There is evidence that:

a. There should be no less than 35 square feet of classroom space for each child.

b. Comfortable room temperatures are maintained so that children do not become overheated, chilled, or cold.

c. There is adequate ventilation in the classroom.

d. Children's wet and/or soiled clothing is changed promptly.

e. Some additional clothing for children is kept on hand in the event that the clothes the child wears to school become soiled/wet.

D. STANDARD: CHILDREN IN THE EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM HAVE OPPORTUNITIES TO UTILIZE PLAY TO TRANSLATE EXPERIENCE INTO UNDERSTANDING.

D.1. Criterion: The value of play is demonstrated throughout all aspects of the program.

D.1.1. Quality Indicators: There is evidence that:

a. Administrators, teachers, and staff can articulate the value of play in relation to children's development.

b. Teachers and staff plan opportunities for children to play each day.

c. Administrators, teachers, and staff plan inservice sessions on the value of play.

d. Administrators, teachers and staff attend inservice and/or conferences sessions related to play.

e. Administrators, teachers, and staff communicate the value of play to parents via newsletters, presentations, etc.

f. The curriculum will reflect the value of play in its philosophy statements.

D.2. Criterion: Time is designated each day for children to explore and play.

D.2.1. Quality Indicators: There is evidence that:

a. The daily schedule reflects a block or blocks of time equally designated for free play and exploration. A minimum of 60 minutes per session is recommended.

b. Children have opportunities to engage in free choice self-initiated activities.

c. Play opportunities are provided for children both indoors and out.

d. Play opportunities are provided for individual and groups of children.

E. STANDARD: THE CURRICULUM IS DESIGNED TO ADDRESS ALL ASPECTS OF CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENT.

E.1. Criterion: Everything that is planned throughout the school day is related to the overall curricular goals.

E.1.1. Quality Indicators: There is evidence that:

a. The entire day has been planned from the child's entry into the program to the child's exit from the program.

b. Each activity, routine, and transition is related to curricular goals.

c. Spontaneous learning experiences are incorporated into the daily schedule as a means to further children's growth and development.

d. Each child receives a greeting, receives individual attention, and is bid "good bye" each day.

e. Adults in the program are aware of what each child is doing throughout the day.

f. Two-way communication exists between home and school so that home events are considered in planning a child's day and school experiences are communicated to the families.

E.2. Criterion: The curriculum is designed to address the unique needs of the young child.

E.2.1. Quality Indicators: There is evidence that:

a. Parents are treated as the most important influence in their child's development.

b. Children have ample opportunities for non-regimented peer interaction.

c. The separation process from home to school is handled with sensitivity and respect for the children's individual needs.

d. Attempts to socialize children are constructive and esteem-enhancing.

e. Children's anti-social behavior is recognized as a lack of skill or knowledge and is appropriately addressed as part of growth and development.

f. Adults in the program recognize that children think and reason differently from more mature learners.

g. Activities, transitions, and routines are designed keeping in mind children's attention span, need for activity, physical development, need for social interaction and attention from caring adults.

E.3. Criterion: The curriculum is designed to include experiences related to children's aesthetic, cognitive, emotional, language, physical, sensory, and social development.

E.3.1. Quality Indicators: There is evidence that the program provides opportunities for the developmental growth of each child in the following areas:

a. Aesthetic development including the development of imagination, as well as an awareness, appreciation and enjoyment of art, music, drama, poetry, prose, and the wonders of the natural world.

b. Emotional development, including the development of basic attitudes of trust, autonomy and initiative as well as a positive self concept.

c. Social development, including acquisiton of interpersonal skills, self-discipline, empathy and respect for others.

d. Cognitive development, including knowledge of the physical world, creative problem solving skills, decision-making skills, and appropriate social knowledge important to the culture.

e. Language development, including auditory discrimination, listening and speaking skills.

f. Physical development, including small and large muscle development, as well as body awareness.

g. Sensory development, including visual, tactile and olfactory perception.

E.4. Criterion: The curriculum is designed to include experiences related to multicultural awareness.

E.4.1. Quality Indicators: There is evidence that:

a. Children have opportunities to interact with adult members of their own and of other cultural groups.

b. Classroom activities include books, pictures, props, music, foods, materials, field trips, and customs representing a wide range of cultural groups.

c. Children receive positive, accurate information about a variety of cultural groups.

d. Multicultural activities are integrated into the daily routines of the program rather than being reserved only for holidays or special occasions.

F. STANDARD: ACTIVITIES ARE DESIGNED TO TEACH CHILDREN CONCEPTS AND SKILLS THROUGH ACTIVE MANIPULATION OF OBJECTS.

F.1. Criterion: The early childhood program provides a wide variety of equipment and materials for children's use.

F.1.1. Quality Indicators: There is evidence that:

a. Children have access to art supplies such as many different kinds of media and implements including easels, tempera, water colors, finger paints, chalk, crayons, colored markers, clay, play-dough,stencils, cookie cutters, magazines, pictures, bags, yarn, colored paper, tissue, etc.

b. Children have access to magnifiers, magnets, pan balance, rocks, shells, plants, animal habitats such as a fish aquarium, or environment for a chameleon or small mammal, abandoned bee hives, or bird nests, leaf and seed collections, and other objects related to the topic of focus in the classroom.

c. Children have access to objects of varying sizes, shapes, and colors for sorting, counting, grouping and catgorizing in addition to varieties of equipment and materials for measuring length, volume and weight.

d. Children have access to musical and rhythm instruments which are available for exploration and experimentation along with a wide variety of records and tapes for children's selection and use.

e. Children have access to a dramatic play area which includes equipment and props that will enable the children to explore a variety of roles.

f. Children have access to large hollow blocks, as well as smaller unit blocks, as well as figures and vehicles that can be chosen by the children to enhance their play.

g. An area of the classroom for the children's use is supplied with age-appropriate books of various sizes, shapes and subjects, along with puppets and other story-telling props such as flannel board and pictures.

h. Children have access to kinesthetic/tactile alphabet letters, pencils, stapler and other supplies that can facilitate a child's exploration of writing.

i. Indoor and outdoor sand/water play areas are supplied with a variety of containers, implements and toys to enrich sand/water play.

j. Young children are provided with many opportunities to interact in meaningful print contexts: listening to stories, participating in shared book experiences, making language experience stories and books, developing expanded vocabularies, reading classroom labels, and using print in the various learning centers, rather than whole group instruction which focuses upon isolated skills which include repetition and memorization.

k. The classroom equipment includes items which will contribute to children's development of fine motor and large motor skills, eye-hand coordination, and visual discrimination. Examples of such items include puzzles, Lego-type blocks, lotto-type toys, peg boards, parquetry blocks with pattern cards, lacing items, balls, bean bags, riding vehicles, etc.

F.2. Criterion: Activities for children are designed to involve the greatest number of senses.

F.2.1. Quality Indicators: There is evidence that:

a. Adults present the concept using methods which focus first on a particular sense, and then on different senses.

b. Adults design activities in which children are able to utilize two or more senses.

c. Adults design activities in which concepts are presented to children in a manner which allows children to use the sense he or she finds most satisfying.

F.3. Criterion: Concepts presented to children via hands-on materials rather than through paper-pencil exercises.

F.3.1. Quality Indicators: There is evidence that:

a. Teachers plan and implement activities which involve children handling three-dimensional objects as a way to gain information and knowledge.

b. Workbooks and dittosheet exercises are not the primary resource used for instruction.

G. STANDARD: ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN ARE DESIGNED SO THAT CONCEPTS AND SKILLS ARE APPROPRIATELY PRESENTED BY UTILIZING A VARIETY OF METHODS AND TECHNIQUES.

G.1. Criterion: Adults present concepts several times using various materials and methods of instruction.

G.1.1. Quality Indicator: There is evidence that:

a. Self-correcting materials are available for children's use.

b. Activities and materials are available for extended periods of time so children can repeat and expand on their previous experience.

c. Additions to learning centers are made throughout time in order to enhance and expand concept development.

d. Children's desire to repeat experiences is encouraged by adults.

e. Language experiences which include repetition are incorporated into children's daily activities.

H. STANDARD: THE CURRICULUM IS DESIGNED TO ENABLE CHILDREN TO EXPERIENCE BOTH CHALLENGE AND SUCCESS.

H.1. Criterion: The early childhood program provides materials which are age-appropriate.

H.1.1. Quality Indicators: There is evidence that:

a. Children have access to toys and other play equipment, as specified in Standard IV, Criterion I.

H.2. Criterion: The early childhood program provides materials which are appropriate for meeting the needs of individual children.

H.2.1. Quality Indicators: There is evidence that:

a. Adults can articulate a match between children's needs and the materials they make available as well as the activities they plan.

b. Children have choices about which materials to use.

H.3. Criterion: The early childhood program is designed to give children an opportunity to explore new materials as well as to explore familiar materials in new ways.

H.3.1. Quality Indicators: There is evidence that:

a. Materials in each learning center change over time.

b. New materials are periodically introduced.

c. Teachers plan experiences, actitivies, visitors, and field trips that are novel.

d. Teachers encourage children to modify in some way old approaches to activities and materials.

e. Children are given opportunities and encouraged to utilize materials constructively in non-standard ways.

H.4. Criterion: The early childhood program is designed so that materials and routines are not changed completely at any one time. Instead, there are opportunities for children to engage in some experiences which are familiar.

H.4.1. Quality Indicators: There is evidence that:

a. Some familiar materials are always made available to children.

b. New experiences build on familiar ones.

H.5. Criterion: The early childhood program is designed to enable adults to teach in ways which address children's differing abilities.

H.5.1. Quality Indicators: There is evidence that:

a. Teachers informally assess children's progress so materials reflect the ability range of the group of and or individual children.

b. Open-ended materials are made available for individual children's exploration and experimentation.

I. STANDARD: THE CURRICULUM IS DESIGNED SO THAT ACTIVITIES ARE CAREFULLY AND DEVELOPMENTALLY SEQUENCED.

I.1. Criterion: Activities are planned and implemented in keeping with children's level of functioning and comprehension.

I.1.1. Quality Indicators: There is evidence that:

a. Adults can articulate developmentally appropriate expectations for children's behavior and performance.

b. Expectations for children's performance are in keeping with child development norms for children of that age or ability level.

c. Routines, activities, and transitions have been individualized to meet the needs of specific children in the group.

d. Teachers are aware of each child's level of functioning and comprehension in relation to aesthetic, emotional, language, cognitive, physical, sensory and social development.

e. Teachers simplify, maintain or extend activities in response to children's demonstrated level of functioning and comprehension.

I.2. Criterion: Activities are planned and implemented so that they build on those presented earlier and lead to those coming next.

I.2.1. Quality Indicators: There is evidence that:

a. Teachers can describe the prerequisite skills children must demonstrate in order to engage in an activity.

b. Children have had opportunities to learn prerequisite skills prior to engaging in the activity for which those skills are required.

c. Teachers have analyzed the tasks they expect children to perform.

d. Teachers have broken tasks down into manageable steps for children to accomplish. The accomplishment may occur within one day, over several days, or over the year.

e. Teachers can articulate to others the ultimate goal toward which a particular activity is related.

f. Teachers can plan and carry out a sequence of activities which might logically enable children to progress toward an ultimate goal.

g. When a child experiences difficulty, the teacher introduces information or materials which make the task more manageable for that child.

h. When a child demonstrates mastery of a given concept or objective, the teacher introduces information or materials which enable the child to make progress toward the next step in the planned sequence.

I.3. Criterion: Activities are planned and implemented so that fundamental skills are presented prior to more complex skills; concrete, hands-on concepts are presented prior ro abstract concepts.

I.3.1. Quality Indicators: There is evidence that:

a. Teachers can identify a particular skill or concept on a continuum from fundamental to complex, concrete to abstract.

b. Teacher plans, over time, reflect a sequence from simple to complex skills from concrete to abstract concepts.

I.4. Criterion: Activities are planned and implemented so children have opportunities to explore concepts and materials prior to being expected to acquire related information, produce a related product or demonstrate a related skill.

I.4.1. Quality Indicators: There is evidence that:

a. Children have opportunities to engage in exploration of materials or concepts with which they have had little prior experience. This may take place within one day, over several days, or throughout the year.

b. Children have opportunities to engage in brief periods of exploration of materials or concepts that are familiar to them prior to dealing with them in some prescribed way.

I.5. Criterion: Activities are planned and implemented which address sequentially all phases of learning: exploration, acquisition, practice and generalization.

I.5.1. Quality Indicators: There is evidence that:

a. Teachers provide many varied opportunities, materials and equipment for children to observe, explore and experiment with their environment on a continuing basis.

b. Teachers present skills, concepts, and information for children to learn, only after children have had ample opportunity for exploration.

c. Children are given opportunities to practice what they have learned prior to being expected to learn something new.

d. Children are given opportunities to apply what they have learned in new situations.

e. Children are given opportunities to discover some skills, concepts and information for themselves.

f. Teachers utilize specific instructional strategies to teach children skills, concepts, or information they cannot discover on their own.

J. STANDARD: THE CURRICULUM IS DESIGNED TO PROMOTE INDIVIDUALIZED INSTRUCTION RATHER THAN REQUIRING CHILDREN TO MOVE AS A GROUP FROM ONE LEARNING OBJECTIVE TO THE NEXT.

J.1. Criterion: Individual planned activities cover a wide enough range of objectives to account for the varying abilities of children in the group.

J.1.1. Quality Indicators; There is evidence that:

a. Activities have more than one objective, since children in a group are not all mastering the same skills at the same time.

b. Teachers can articulate a developmentally appropriate range of objectives for each activity they plan.

c. Teachers can describe how a given activity relates to the developmental needs of individual children.

J.2. Criterion: Each child's progress is measured in terms of individual development rather than in comparison to or in competition with others in the group.

J.2.1. Quality Indicators: There is evidence that:

a. Teachers keep a record of each child's progress throughout the year related to his or her aesthetic, emotional, language, cognitive, physical, sensory and social development.

b. Children's personal accomplishments are praised.

c. Children are graded or evaluated on the basis of individual accomplishments and not by comparison to the accomplishments or development of other children.

d. Children's lack of accomplishment is never purposely brought to the attention of the group.

e. Children are not penalized in any way for lagging behind their classmates in any area of development.

f. Children are never pressured into progressing faster than they are able simply because others in the group are more advanced.

J.3. Criterion: All children are not required to accomplish the same objective at the same point in time.

J.3.1. Quality Indicators: There is evidence that:

a. Learning objectives are presented on numerous occasions and in a variety of ways.

b. The sequence and rate in which learning objectives are presented is in keeping with children's individual needs rather than based on a predetermined schedule.

K. STANDARD: THE CURRICULUM IS DESIGNED TO ENABLE CHILDREN TO LEARN THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE IMPORTANT TO THEM.

K.1. Criterion: The early childhood program allows for flexible curriculum planning and scheduling.

K.1.1. Quality Indicators: There is evidence that:

a. Children involved in exploration and experimentation are encouraged to continue without unnecessary interruption.

b. Children are allowed to pursue activities at their own pace, rather than always being required to "rotate" from area to area on a schedule.

c. Teachers take advantage of spontaneous events to expand children's knowledge and experience base.

d. Teachers do not plan an entire year's themes at the beginning of the year.

e. Teachers revise or replace their plans for an activity if they recognize it is not in keeping with children's current needs.

f. Teachers encourage spontaneous, as well as planned, investigation of those occurrences which arouse a child's curiosity and interest.

K.2. Criterion: The early childhood program is designed in such a way that children's ideas, interests and concerns are acknowledged, respected and supported.

K.2.1. Quality Indicators: There is evidence that:

a. Teachers answer children's questions promptly and accurately.

b. Teachers respond to children's ideas and suggestions and implement them when feasible.

c. Home and community events important to children are addressed in a timely manner and used as an opportunity for learning.

K.3. Criterion: The early childhood program is designed to incorporate children's ideas, interests and concerns as the basis for activity planning.

K.3.1. Quality Indicators: There is evidence that:

a. Materials children request frequently are made available, as appropriate.

b. Ideas for weekly themes and activities are based on the staff's knowledge of topics and issues important or interesting to children in the group.

c. Children are encouraged to seek answers to their questions by experimentation.

L. STANDARD: ADULTS IN THE EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM USE LANGUAGE WHICH ENHANCES CHILDREN'S CRITICAL THINKING.

L.1. Criterion: Adults talk with children individually and in small groups.

L.1.1. Quality Indicators: There is evidence that:

a. Adults in the program plan or take advantage of spontaneous events to talk with each child individually.

b. Activity plans include time for small group discussions.

L.2. Criterion: Adults ask children open-ended questions.

L.2.1. Quality Indicators: There is evidence that:

a. Adults ask children questions to which there is more than one correct answer.

b. Adults ask children questions that require more than a one word answer.

L.3. Criterion: Adults ask children questions which require them to predict or make judgements.

L.3.1. Quality Indicators: There is evidence that:

a. Adults ask "what if, how, or why" questions which require youngsters to predict cause and effect relationships.

b. Adults offer children choices from which to choose.

c. Adults offer children opportunities to evaluate the decisions the children have made.

L.4. Criterion: Adults encourage a child to understand the perspective of another person.

L.4.1. Quality Indicators: There is evidence that:

a. Adults talk to children about the children's emotions and the emotions of others.

b. Adults encourage children to make judgements about how they, or another person, might react in a given circumstance.

c. Adults provide children with information regarding other people's views in a given situation.

L.5. Criterion: Adults involve children in decision making.

L.5.1. Quality Indicators: There is evidence that:

a. Children have opportunities to help make class rules.

b. Children have opportunities to contribute their ideas to class decisions.

c. Children are involved in planning, implementing, and evaluating some class activities.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT AND EQUIPMENT

The physical setting, including the availability and arrangement of space and all appointments, such as toys and other materials or supplies needed to operate the early childhood program.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT AND EQUIPMENT

M. STANDARD: THE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAM PROVIDES ADEQUATE AND APPROPRIATE FACILITIES, SPACE, EQUIPMENT, SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS.

M.1. Criterion: The facility is safe, secure and complies with the legal requirements of the appropriate licensing or accrediting local or state agency.

M.1.1. Quality Indicators: There is evidence that:

a. Children are protected from access to hazard areas(e.g., streets, parking lots, driveways, swimming pools, hot stoves, incinerators, etc.)

b. An annual inspection is made by the local or state fire marshal.

c. Medicine and all toxic substances are stored and locked out of children's reach.

d. The program has written procedures for the evacuation and care of children and staff for each of the following emergencies:

- -fire
- -tornado
- -serious accident or injury

e. Smoking is prohibited in areas where children are present.

M.2. Criterion: Physical space is arranged into learning centers and activity areas.

M.2.1. Quality Indicators: There is evidence that:

a. The classroom space is divided in such a way that several small group activities can take place simultaneously.

b. The classroom space is divided into small group areas, each one focusing on a different curricular domain (aesthetic, emotional, language, cognitive, sensory, social, physical).

c. The activity areas in the classroom represent a variety of physical structures (e.g., table activities, open space, a dramatic play corner, etc.).

d. The activity areas in the classroom represent a variety of instructional strategies (e.g., child initiated, adult initiated, quiet, active, solitary play and cooperative play activities).

M.3. Criterion: Physical space is arranged to facilitate both privacy for children and group interaction.

M.3.1. Quality Indicators: There is evidence that:

a. A carpeted area is available for whole group gatherings.

b. The classroom design includes spaces where the child can be away from the group and observed by staff.

c. There is a place for each child to hang his or her clothing and store personal belongings.

d. The classroom design allows children unobstructed movement from area to area.

M.4. Criterion: Physical space is arranged to promote the goals of the curriculum.

M.4.1. Quality Indicators: There is evidence that:

a. Furniture is of suitable size for the age of the children.

b. The classroom includes an area for messy activities.

c. Materials for the children's use are easily accessible to them.

d. Classrooms are clean and uncluttered.

e. The facility has an outdoor play area which includes a variety of surfaces and elevations (soil, grass, sand, hard, flat, and elevated).

f. Playground equipment is of suitable size for the age of the children.

g. Water is made available with which children can play and/or wash.

ADVISORY COUNCIL — COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

An organized group of persons which serves as a communication link between the home, school and community. This council assists administrators and teachers in planning, developing and reviewing the early childhood education program.

ADVISORY COUNCIL / COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

N. STANDARD: AN ADVISORY COUNCIL IS ORGANIZED AND HAS RESPONSIBILITY FOR ADVISING, RECOMMENDING AND ASSISTING SCHOOL PERSONNEL CONCERNED WITH THE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAM.

N.1. Criterion: An advisory council has membership which is representative of the community.

N.1.1. Quality Indicators: The advisory council:

a. Is comprised of members who are selected/elected or recommended by the early childhood program staff, school administrators, parent group(s), and the community.

b. Includes diverse representation of the community, such as parents/guardians, business/industry, parent education professionals, university/college educators, child development advocacy groups, interdisciplinary (human services) professions, etc.

c. Has appropriate representaion as found in the community including: males and females; racial/ethnic groups, including limited English proficiency; persons with handicapping conditions; public/non-profit agency programs; private/profit programs.

d. Includes representatives of the early childhood education staff as ex-officio members.

e. Has a roster of members in a form that is available to all interested persons.

N.2. Criterion: The advisory council operates within established goals and objectives for the early childhood education program.

N.2.1. Quality Indicators: The advisory council:

a. Meets at least twice each year.

b. Operates within the framework of written policies or bylaws.

c. Elects a chairperson and a secretary.

d. Follows a planned agenda which is distributed to the group prior to each meeting.

e. Maintains meeting minutes which are distributed to the members following each meeting.

f. Maintains a file or minutes for all meetings.

N.3. Criterion: The advisory council has established roles and responsibilities for advising and assisting the staff regarding the program.

N.3.1. Quality Indicators: An advisory coucil will make recommendations concerning:

a. The needs of the community.

b. Long range program planning.

c. Program budget and fiscal concerns.

d. Personnel issues (staffing design, evaluation, career development, etc.).

e. Annual program evaluation.

N.4. Criterion: The advisory council has responsibility for actively supporting the early childhood education programs through public relations efforts.

N.4.1. Quality Indicators: An advisory council:

a. Is active with interpreting and promoting the early childhood program to persons in the community, local organizations and legislature.

b. Actively promotes the early childhood education program with the school board and administrators, when appropriate.

N.5. Criterion: Community representatives and resources are identified and effectively utilized by the early childhood education staff.

N.5.1. Quality Indicators: The advisory council is used:

a. To maintain a current and comprehensive list of community resources such as professional and service organizations, business and industry, and human service agencies.

b. As a means of including community resources in the delivery of the program through field trips, speakers, classroom aides, etc.

c. As an opportunity for parents and community members to visit, observe, and/or participate in establishing the goals and objectives of the early childhood education program.

PARENT / FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Family-oriented programs which are integrated into the overall early childhood education program and which provide parents and other family members with opportunities to participate in all phases of program development and implementation. Opportunities for parents and families to receive support, expand knowledge of child development, increase parenting skills and extend children's learning at home are included.

PARENT / FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

O. STANDARD: THE EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM PROVIDES SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES, ASSISTS PARENTS IN DEVELOPING AN INDEPTH UNDERSTANDING OF CHILDREN, AND ENCOURAGES FAMILY MEMBERS TO PARTICIPATE IN ALL PHASES OF THE PROGRAM.

O.1. Criterion: Opportunities for involvement in the child's classroom program are extended to parents and other family members.

O.1.1. Quality Indicators: Opportunities for parent/family participation include:

a. Assisting with teacher-initiated activities during individual and group activities.

b. Assisting children in meeting their needs.

c. Assisting with the supervision and facilitation of activity centers.

d. Assisting in planning and implementing field trips, visitation, and demonstrations.

e. Assisting with preparation of learning materials for daily activities.

f. Observing children in the classroom context.

g. Contributing ideas or activities for the curriculum.

h. Providing occupational and cultural role models.

O.2. Criterion: Opportunities for participation in activities outside of the child's classroom are available to parents and other family members.

O.2.1. Quality Indicators: Opportunities include participation in:

a. Advisory council or committee activities including program planning, development, implementation and evaluation.

b. Parent education, enrichment or parent support group programs and activities.

c. Parent-to-parent outreach and support efforts.

d. Family activities(potlucks, movies, workshops, etc.).

e. Support services and resources offered by other agencies or institutions.

O.3. Criterion: Parents and family members are provided access to special services if/when needed.

O.3.1. Quality Indicators: Access is provided to:

a. Special services or equipment to facilitate learning in regular classroom settings.

b. Special education services.

c. Children's Protective Services, through referrals for suspected child abuse or neglect.

d. Parent support groups, through referral of high risk parents to appropriate community programs.

O.4. Criterion: The staff and advisory council of each early childhood education program will review and evaluate program requirements, policies, and procedures, activities, and events to determine (1) program responsiveness to families' needs and constraints and (2) program impact on family systems.

O.4.1. Quality Indicators: Program responsiveness to families includes:

a. The planning of parent-staff meetings, parent education and enrichment series, and parent participation opportunities in ways that reflect varying work and family schedules.

b. The provision of child care during meetings and events which involve parents without their children.

c. Facilitation of car pools and other transportation opportunities as needed.

d. At-home learning activities which can be completed with materials usually found at home in the context of daily family activities and routines.

e. Periodic surveys (formal questionnaires and informal inquiries) requesting parent input regarding their interests and needs and their level of satisfaction with a range of program components.

O.5. Criterion: The administrators and instructional staff of the early childhood education program maintain close contact with parents and other family members and seek input from the family about the child and his/her program.

O.5.1. Quality Indicators: Family-staff interaction and exchange occurs through:

a. At least two home visits to each family annually.

b. Phone calls.

c. Written communications including notes, letters, and newsletters.

d. Parent-teacher conferences and planning sessions.

e. Parent-staff meetings (individual and group).

f. Parent participation in the classroom.

g. Parent-child events and family activities attended by program staff.

O.6. Criterion: Parents and other family members have access to information, resources, and materials which improve the quality of family life and/or support children's learning and development.

O.6.1. Quality Indicators: Access is provided to:

a. A clearly marked, easily accessible space (a room or a corner of a room with shelves and a bulletin board) which contains information and resources for families in the form of books, learning handouts, brochures and flyers about events of interest to families with young children.

b. materials (books, pamphlets, activity cards) about child and family development, discipline, and parenting.

c. Information and materials regarding services available through community/resource agencies.

FUNDING

The provision, appropriation and use of monies to support the operation of the early childhood education program.

FUNDING

P. STANDARD: FUNDS ARE PROVIDED FOR RESOURCES TO IMPLEMENT AN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAM, REFLECTIVE OF THE STATE AND LOCAL PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY, STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES.

P.1. Criterion: Funds are provided to purchase resources for instruction.

P.1.1. Quality Indicators: Funds are provided for:

a. Classrooms and maintenance.

b. Assurance of safety and health.

c. Assurance of accessibility for all children and adults.

d. Instructional materials and supplies which contribute to teaching and learning.

e. The purchase and maintenance of equipment which contribute to the teaching/learning situation.

f. Materials and supplies to implement all program components and accomplish all program objectives.

g. Evaluation of the early childhood education program.

h. Employment of teacher aides, paraprofessionals, and other ancillary personnel to assist program implementation.

i. Developing and revising curricular and instructional materials.

P.2. Criterion: Funds are provided for salaries, wages and benefits for all preschool program staff that are commensurate with other K-12 district staff with similar assignments and responsibilities and under the same contract.

P.2.1. Quality Indicators: Funds are provided for:

a. The number of early childHood staff necessary to conduct and administer the early childhood program.

b. Additional pay, compensatory time, or released time with pay for all early childhood staff to participate in staff development activities to concur with contractual agreements.

c. Salaries of substitute instructional personnel for instructional staff members who participate in authorized professional development activities.

P.3. Criterion: Staff development funds are provided for all early childhood staff for authorized expenses and activities, including transportation and per diem expenses, according to local and state guidelines.

P.3.1. Quality Indicators: Funds are provided for:

a. Authorized expenses, including travel and registration for early childhood staff to participate in local and state inservice activities.

b. Authorized expenses, including travel and registration for administrative/supervisory staff to assist and supervise instructional staff.

P.4. Criterion: Funds are provided to support parent involvement programs and family oriented activities.

P.4.1. Quality Indicators: Funds are provided for:

a. Care giver services during parent workshops and/or group meetings.

b. Assisting parent participation in special events and other meetings.

c. Resource materials for training and/or group meetings.

ADMINISTRATIVE / SUPERVISORY PERSONNEL

Personnel at the local level who are responsible for administering and/or supervising program services and activities of the early childhood education program and providing leadership to the instructional staff. Such personnel could include district level or building administrators/supervisors who are responsible for the early childhood education program, or a cluster of programs of which early childhood education is included. Also included are program directors and specialists.

ADMINSTRATIVE / SUPERVISORY PERSONNEL

Q. STANDARD: THE EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM IS ADMINISTERED BY AN EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIALIST; SUCH AS CONSULTANTS FROM THE INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICT, INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION OR STATE AGENCY; LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT OR CONSORTIUM PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR AND EXPERIENCED TEACHER IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION.

Q.1. Criterion: The early childhood specialist is qualified to supervise and manage the early childhood program, to evaluate the program and to direct program and staff development.

Q.1.1. Quality Indicators: The early childhood specialist has:

a. A graduate degree in early childhood or child development.

b. Demonstrated successful experience working with young children in a group setting.

c. Educational preparation and/or experience in planning, developing, implementing, and evaluating curriculum for a variety of populations.

d. Educational preparation and/or experience in the supervision and evaluation of personnel.

e. Educational preparation and/or experience in managing, implementing, and evaluating staff professional development programs.

Q.2. Criterion: The early childhood administrator is qualified to implement, evaluate and manage the early childhood program and the budget, to coordinate the organization and utilization of the advisory council, and to serve as a link between the early childhood program and the district's central administration, and the appropriate local, state and federal agencies.

Q.2.1. Quality Indicators: The early childhood program administrator has:

a. The educational training to meet the state and local requirements for an elementary school administrator.

b. Educational preparation in the developmental approach to early childhood education.

c. Demonstrated successful experience working with children in group settings.

d. Educational preparation and experience in the supervision, management, and evaluation of personnel, facilities, and program budget.

e. Educational preparation and experience for the coordination of the early childhood program with other local, state and federal agencies.

f. Responsibility for obtaining the resources necessary to fund the program.

Q.3. Criterion: The early childhood specialist and/or the program administrator have the responsibility for directing the evaluation activities of the program and instructional personnel.

Q.3.1. Quality Indicators: The early childhood specialist and/or program administrator:

a. Plan and direct, in conjunction with teachers, staff and parents; the annual evaluation of the early childhood education program utilizing local, state, and national standards or criteria for early childhood education.

b. Use a variety of techniques (observation, self-evaluation, etc.) to evaluate staff performance according to local, state, and national standards and/or criteria.

c. Utilize the results of staff performance evaluation to plan activities for program improvement, staff development and training.

Q.4. Criterion: The early childhood specialist and/or program administrator participates in continuing education/professional development activities.

Q.4.1. Quality Indicators: The early chldhood administrator/supervisor:

a. Participates in at least one early childhood professional development activity such as college course, inservice activity, workshop, seminar or training program each year to update knowledge and experience.

b. Actively associates with at least one professional organization concerning young children.

c. Actively seeks knowledge and ideas by using professional publications.

INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF PERSONNEL

The instructional staff includes all personnel who are assigned responsibility for teaching or assisting in teaching in the early childhood education program. Such personnel may include the early childhood teacher, paraprofessional or associate teacher*, and teacher aide or teacher assistant* and non-paid personnel, including parents and other volunteers.

* the titles associate and teacher assistant, as used in some settings, are included to concur with the nomenclature provided by the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

R. STANDARD: EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS ARE STAFFED BY INDIVIDUALS WITH DIFFERING LEVELS OF EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE AND THE INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF SHOULD HAVE RESPONSIBILITIES COMMENSURATE WITH THEIR BACKGROUNDS AND EDUCATIONAL TRAINING.

R.1. Criterion: The early childhood teacher3** is qualified to develop and implement an educational program appropriate to the developmental needs of the children and families being served. He or she is responsible for the care and education of the group of children served as well as the development of continuing parent education and involvement groups.

R.1.1. Quality Indicators: The early childhood teacher has educational training including:

a. An early childhood (ZA)4** endorsement or a bachelor's degree in early childhood/preschool education or child development, or equivalent continuing education experience as approved by the state board of education, or equivalent experience as a certified teacher of children 0 through 6 years of age.

Certified elementary teachers who do not have either ZA endorsement or equivalent State Board of Education approved continuing education units may be employed beginning September 1, 1988, if enrolled in an early childhood/preschool education or child development program & must complete the

3** The titles associate and teacher assistant, as used in some settings, are included to concur with the nomenclature provided by the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

4** The ZA endorsement is given by Michigan colleges and universities upon completion of an 18-hour early childhood education program requirement and is recognized by the Michigan Department of Education as fulfillment of teacher certification in pre-kindergarten and kindergarten.

ZA endorsement program within five years. Beginning September 1, 1993, all teachers must have early childhood (ZA) endorsement.

Certified elementary teachers assigned to preschool programs prior to September 1,1988, who do not meet either of the above criteria, may continue to teach young children.

b. Courses and supervised field experience which meet the criterion established by the Teacher Preparation and Certification Division of the Michigan Department of Education in evaluating programs submitted for approval for the ZA endorsement, according to criteria established by the State Board of Education.

R.1.2. Quality Indicators: The early childhood teacher5** has had work/field experience including:

a. Opportunities to plan and implement developmentally appropriate activities for preschool children.

b. Opportunities to observe and evaluate the growth of children within an appropriate classroom setting over an extended period of time.

c. Opportunities to plan and implement a parent education program.

d. Preparation to plan, implement, and manage the curriculum through a variety of teaching strategies.

e. Preparation to establish and utilize positive classroom management techniques and discipline procedures.

f. Preparation to plan and implement activities which are multi-cultural and non-sexist.

5 The titles associate and teacher assistant, as used in some settings, are included to concur with the nomenclature provided by the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

g. Preparation in supervision, management and evaluation techniques for the appropriate coordination of instructional and support staff.

R.2. Criterion: The early childhood support staff, the paraprofessionals or associate teachers6** and teacher aides or teacher assistants6**, are trained to implement program activities and assist in the care and education of the children served under the supervision of the early childhood teacher.

R.2.1. Quality Indicators: The early childhood paraprofessional or associate teacher7** is supervised by the early childhood teacher who has:

a. An associate degree in early childhood/preschool education, child development, child care of Child Development Associate8** (CDA) credential or equivalent continuing education experience, as approved by the State Board of Education.

b. Supervised work or field experience implementing educational activities for young children.

6** The Child Development Associate is a nationally recognized credential awarded through the Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition, a subsidiary of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, to individuals who have demonstrated criteria-based competence in working with children 3-5 years of age.

7** The titles associate and teacher assistant, as used in some settings, are included to concur with the nomenclature provided by the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

8** The Child Development Associate is a nationally recognized credential awarded through the Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition, a subsidiary of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, to individuals who have demonstrated criteria-based competence in working with children 3-5 years of age.

R.2.2. Quality Indicators: The early childhood teacher aide or teacher assistant is supervised by the early childhood teacher who has:

a. Participated in directed training programs and/or activities in child development or early childhood education.

b. Volunteer or work experience assisting in the education and/or care of preschool children.

R.3. Criterion: Supplementary staff, non-paid personnel (such as parents, volunteers, etc.), used in the early childhood program to enhance program goals.

R.3.1. Quality Indicators: Supplementary staff will be:

a. Screened in order to protect the physical and emotional safety of the children in the program.

b. Oriented to understand program goals and objectives as well as basic methods of positive interaction with children.

c. Assigned tasks and responsibilities commensurate with their own levels of skills, areas of skills, and areas of strength.

d. Evaluated by the early childhood teacher.

e. Encouraged to take advantage of professional development and advancement opportunities.

f. Excluded from the count to determine staff-child ratios (because attendance is voluntary).

S. STANDARD: THE EARLY CHILDHOOD INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF IS INVOLVED IN PROFESSIONAL/CAREER DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES/PROGRAM.

S.1. Criterion: The instructional staff participates in ongoing professional development activities including inservice training, professional workshops, courses at institutions of higher education, teacher exchange, observation, coaching and other training experiences.

S.1.1. Quality Indicators: The early childhood teacher:

a. Meets the mandated guidelines for maintaining and continuing teacher certification or credentialing.

b. Particpates in at least one early childhood professional development activity such as a college course, inservice activity, workshop, seminar or training program each year to update knowledge and experience. Released time and necessary funds are provided.

S.1.2. Quality Indicators: Instructional staff professional/career development efforts are assisted and supported by:

a. District administrators and supervisors.

b. Maintaining available professional resources related to early childhood research, methods and techniques for classroom management, and/or child development theories, etc.

c. Establishing inservice training activities/programs to meet individual staff needs.

d. Evaluating the performance of support staff in accordance with guidelines, contractual agreements, or policies.

S.1.3. Quality Indicator: Instructional staff is:

a. Affiliated with a local, state and/or national organization advocating for young children and families.

T. STANDARD: TO ACHIEVE OPTIMUM EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES FOR THE CHILDREN, STAFF PATTERNS WHICH ALLOW FOR MAXIMUM STAFF-CHILD INTERACTION AND PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION SHOULD BE UTILIZED.

T.1. Criterion: Class size, teacher-student ratio, and program standards shall determine the instructional staffing pattern for each classroom.

T.1.1. Quality Indicators: Early childhood classes will:

a. Have a recommended range for enrollment of 15-18 children9** or the number of children specified in pertinent legislation.

b Have an early childhood teacher for each independently functioning classroom who will be assisted by an early chilhood paraprofessional or associate teacher in classes of more than eight children9**, or the number of children specified in pertinent legislation.

c. Be under the direction of administrative/supervisory personnel, including district level or building administrators/supervisors who are responsible for the early childhood education program, or a cluster of programs of which early childhood education is included, in consultation with a specialist in early childhood education.

**9 the recommended range for class size, and teacher pupil ratio, is based on: (1) criteria established by the National Association for the Education of Young Children: (2) Characteristics of a high quality preschool program identified by Schweinhart and Weikart, 1984: New York State, 1982: Weikart, 1985.

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